CHURCH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

St. Luke's Church

Newtown, Pa.

YEAR BOOK

Saint Luke's Day

OCTOBER 18, 1921

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Foreword

In issuing this little book to the members of S. Luke's Parish, the Rector believes that it will be found useful as a handy reference and a book of record. No doubt many will welcome the history, now for the first time set forth in convenient form.

Inasmuch as the advertisements herein, have made possible the printing of the Year Book, a generous patronage will indicate our appreciation of the service thus rendered.

Saint Luke's Church

Washington Avenue *Newtown, Pa.*

SERVICES

Sundays

Holy Communion 7.30
Morning Prayer 11.00
First Sunday in month and Festivals,
Holy Communion
Evensong 7.45
Sunday School ..... 10 A. M.

WEEKDAYS

Wednesday, Evensong 7.45
Thursday, Holy Communion 7.00
Holy Days, Holy Communion ..... 7.00 or 9.30

ORGANIZATION

Rector

The Rev. G. Herbert Dennison, M. A.

Rector Emeritus

The Rev. J. Thompson Carpenter

Wardens

Horace G. Reeder John S. Bryan

Vestrymen

Henry Afflerbach John B. Chambers
John H. Mitchell George Gore
George H. McMaster, Secretary

Lay Readers

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Organist

Mrs. David Feaster

Sexton

Harry C. Cassar

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Miss Mabel W. Hibbs
Mrs. David Feaster
Miss Mary H. Douglass
Miss Margaret M. Douglas
Mr. William J. Ellis

Head of Altar Guild

Miss Esther M. Watson

Head of Embroidery Guild

Miss Grace Dennison

WOMAN'S AUXILIARY

President—Mrs. Edward P. Hicks
Vice President—Mrs. J. A. Crewitt
Secretary—Miss Miriam Reeder
Treasurer—Miss Anna P. Chambers
United Thank Offering Treasurer—Mrs. J. A. Crewitt

The Auxiliary meets second Tuesday in month at 2.30

JUNIOR AUXILIARY

Head—Miss Agnes B. Dennison

MEN'S GUILD

Chairman—John S. Bryan
Secretary—George H. McMaster

The Year

The past year has been one of steady advance in several directions. The attendance at the Sunday morning services has increased, especially at the early celebrations. More of our Communicants are learning to appreciate the helpfulness to devotion afforded by the early hour, as well as the opportunity of observing the Church's rule of receiving the Holy Communion fasting. The girls of the Junior Auxiliary, have adopted the practice of making a corporate communion on the fourth Sunday of each month; and it is a pleasure to see so many present on this Sunday.

At the every-member canvass last Fall, there was a gratifying increase of contributors as well as of contributions, and S. Luke's gained the distinction of being one of the comparatively few parishes in the diocese that met its quota.

The work of S. Luke's Branch of the Woman's Auxiliary, deserves first place among our parochial activities. Under the vigorous direction of its President, a carefully planned program of meetings was carried out with satisfaction and edification for all. With the purpose of complying with the diocesan plan of Mission Study, our program committee arranged a two-year course on the "Survey", so that at each meeting, immediately after the business was disposed of, all the members present became a study class for the subject of the day. During the season the Auxiliary studied "Alaska," "China," "The Negroes," "Appalachia," and "Latin America" Part 1.

Through this method a very live interest was elicited, and a far larger number of persons benefited by the study. The diocesan allotment of sewing was done, the valuation of which was over fifty dollars.

The girls of the Junior Auxiliary have met regularly during the year. They assisted in the sewing

of the Senior Branch, and also sent a small Christmas box to the Home of S. Michael and All Angels.

The Men's Guild continued its commendable custom of holding services in the Arcade Hall on the Sunday afternoons in Lent. The addresses were given by laymen, and were, without exception, full of interest, instruction and good advice. The attendance was large, and on two occasions somewhat taxed the capacity of the hall.

The Embroidery Guild undertook for its year's work, the making of a new green set. The result of their painstaking labor was seen on the first Sunday in June, when the super-frontal, pulpit desk hanging, and bible markers were used for the first time. The designs are very pleasing and effective and the quality of the workmanship compares favorably with the best we have seen elsewhere. The rest of the set will be ready for use in the Epiphany season.

PARISH FESTIVAL, OCT. 18-25

Just a year ago our Parish Festival was well kept with special services and meetings. It is hoped that our people will come this year with enthusiasm and in even larger numbers, to keep the feast. During the Octave there will be additional services, a missionary conference and a Parish reception. The benefit to be derived from such an observance as this, is to befound in a deeper realization of what may be called the social aspect of the Christian religion. We are "members one of another," and constitute a portion of the great family of God. It is a time to think of our parochial duties as well as of the duties and responsibilities involved in our membership in the Body of Christ.

The Rector hopes that all the Communicants will receive the Holy Communion on the Sunday within

the Octave, with special intention for God's blessing upon our work and for Grace to live more worthily of our Christian profession.

The Bishop of the Diocese has appointed Sunday November 20th at 7.45 P. M., as the time for his annual visitation to S. Luke's, to administer the Sacrament of Confirmation.

History of S. Luke's Parish

Thinking that it would be of interest and value to our parishioners to have a history of the Parish which they may keep for reference, the following has been prepared from the address given by Mr. George A. Jenks in 1907, with some additional notes.

"In writing an account of the early history of S. Luke's Church, Newtown, Pa., we are embarrassed and hampered by the fact that all of the minutes of the vestry, before 1851, have been lost; except those of March 21st, May 12th, and Dec. 15th, 1834, and May 27th, 1835. These minutes, which will be referred to hereafter, were written on loose sheets of paper. I will therefore have to depend on other records and papers of the Church, during that period; and upon my own personal recollection which extends back almost to the first steps taken to organize the Church; and such outside information which I may have gathered.

The first mention I find in regard to an attempt to organize an Episcopal Church in this place, is in a small subscription book, which I found among the Church papers. From this I copy as follows:—"We the undersigned, promise to pay the amount annexed to our names respectively, to Dr. Phineas Jenks, for the purpose of erecting an Episcopal Church in Newtown. All sums above fifty dollars to be paid in

three annual instalments. The Church to be under the management of the nearest Episcopal vestry, until the congregation which may hereafter become connected with it, shall elect one for themselves, June 4th, 1832." This is the first record I can find relating to the establishment of our Church. There must have been considerable work and consultation before this paper was drawn. In whose brain the idea of establishing our Church originated, we can only conjecture. But it must have been from among those who afterward were most active in organizing the Church. Under the terms of this subscription agreement, S. Luke's Church must have been under the management of S. James' Church, Bristol; it being the nearest Church. But I can find no record of S. James' Church, in the matter.

That the parties did not proceed blindly and without due caution, is shown by the next two articles in this small book. They are as follows:—

Philadelphia, Sept., 17th 1832.

"Having confidence in the plan proposed by Dr. Jenks, that a vestry will soon be elected at Newtown, I cheerfully recommend the erection of an Episcopal Church at that place, to the patronage of the Episcopalians of the Diocese of Pennsylvania.

H. U. Onderdonk,
Ass't Bp., Dioc., Penna.

"I join in the above.

Wm. White.

We here have the sanction of not only the Assistant Bishop, but also of the venerated First Bishop of the Diocese of Pennsylvania. This recommendation is followed by the recommendation of Dr. Stephen H. Tyng, rector of S. Paul's Church, Philadelphia, as follows:—

"The representations of Dr. Jenks convince me of the great importance to the cause of religion in the

place referred to, of the erection of the church for which the subscription is made.

Stephen H. Tyng.

With these recommendations, subscriptions were obtained in this small book, to the amount of $1341.00. Among the subscribers are a number of distinguished Episcopalians residing in Philadelphia. The largest subscriptions are by two members of the first vestry, who respectively subscribed $100, in this small book, and $500 each additional in the treasurer's book, making a subscription for each of $600. From the entries on the credit side of the treasurer's account, we can ascertain that the work in building the church was commenced in 1832, as he takes credit for work and materials during that year. From this account we also ascertain that an agreement was made for the purchase of the Church lot, as we find a credit for $125 paid James Phillips for the lot, though the deeds show that he did not convey the lot until 1834. "James Phillips and wife by Indenture, dated September 26th, 1834, and recorded in the Recorder's Office at Doylestown, conveyed for a consideration of $240, unto Dr. Phineas Jenks, James Worth and William Paff, the survivors or survivor of them, their heirs and assigns, a certain lot described by metes and bounds, containing 100 feet on the South side of the Yardleyville road, (now Washington Avenue) and extending southward 150 feet." This deed further recites after the description of the lot, as follows:—"Upon which a Brick Church, called St. Luke's, has been erected." This deed proves that when the agreement to purchase was made, the lot was taken possession of and the church erected, without waiting until the conveyance was made.

Jenks, Worth and Paff, by Indenture bearing date the 9th day of March A. D. 1836, (after the incorpora-

tion of the Church),and recorded at Doylestown, granted the above named lot to "The Rector, Church Wardens, and Vestrymen of St. Luke's Church, in the County of Bucks,"—the corporate name of the Church. On the same day, David Roberts and wife conveyed to the corporation, the lot immediately adjoining the above, containing 100 by 75 feet. This lot was purchased for the purpose of erecting sheds and for a graveyard.

In Bishop Onderdonk's address to the Convention of 1833, he notes that a church is being erected at Newtown. The church as originally built, had neither tower or bell; and walled in the front was a marble tablet, with the inscription—"Founded 1832." By going into the second story of the present belltower, this tablet can be seen.

I can find no record of services in the church before 1834, although I have been informed that the Rev. Greenbury W. Ridgeley held services here before that time. G. Morris Dorrance, Esq., has kindly examined the minutes of S. James' Church, Bristol, for me. He informs me that in the minutes of July 30th, 1832, Rev. G. W. Ridgeley attended the meeting of the Vestry, and resigned his rectorship of the congregation. He also informs me that there is no mention of Newtown during the time Mr. Ridgeley was their Rector.

I now come to the first attempt to make a regular organization of the parish. The minutes of March 29th, 1834, show that the Rev. G. W. Ridgeley was then Rector. And from the fact that he had resigned from S. James', Bristol, in 1832, and was acknowledged as Rector of S. Luke's, Newtown, on March 29th, 1834, we may safely assume that he was Rector, or

had charge of the Church from its very inception. The minutes commence as follows:—

Newtown, March 29th, 1834

St. Luke's Church

"In pursuance of notice given by Rev. G. W. Ridgeley, Rector, to the congregation worshiping in said Church on Sabbath morning, 23rd, inst., a number of the pew-holders met in the church for the purpose of electing a committee to act as Vestry for the ensuing year, commencing March 31st, 1834.

At this meeting the following persons were elected Vestrymen:—James Worth, Phineas Jenks, John H. Gordon, William Paff and David Harman. The next meeting of the vestry was held on May 12th, 1834. Phineas Jenks was elected Senior Warden, and the Rector appointed James Worth Junior Warden. The Church then appeared to be fully organized with a Rector, two Wardens and a Vestry. It was represented that "this meeting had been called to decide whether the Committee would take an organ for which a subscription had been entered on, and assume the responsibility of the payment of its price. "On motion," Dr. Jenks and Mr. Paff were appointed a committee who are authorized to pay $200, to Messrs. Hale, Contractors, for furnishing the church with an organ, give their note for the balance of $150, payable within three years, on the condition that the said contractors instruct someone, designated by the Vestry, in the art of playing on the organ, for the term of six months, and keep it in repair for the term of three years after its location in the church." This organ was built in the East-room on the first floor of the building at the Southeast corner of State St., and Centre Avenue, in Newtown. It was placed in the gallery of the church, where it remained many years,

until a new organ was purchased and placed where the present one stands.

The next meeting of the Vestry of which we have a record, was held Dec. 15th, 1834, and the treasurer was desired to give notice to the pew-holders, that the pew rents would be due on January 1st, next.

The Parish was admitted into union with the Convention on May 21st, 1835. In the following year on the Sunday after Ascension, May 15th, 1836, the Church was consecrated by Bishop Onderdonk, who also preached the sermon. The Rev Mr. Ridgeley, read the Sentence of Consecration, and the Lessons. In his Convention address, three days later, the Bishop made this interesting statement:—"On Sunday last, the 15th, inst., I consecrated S. Luke's Church, Newtown, Bucks County, a very neat and commodious edifice, the erection of which and the gathering of the respectable and numerous congregation worshiping in it on ground where our worship and distinctive principles were recently almost unknown, and within the space of two or three years, reflect the highest credit on the labors of the pastor and on the perseverance of his originally few but determined lay adherents." From the records of the same Convention, we find that a large part of one afternoon was consumed by discussion as to the right of the Rector of S. Luke's to a seat in the Convention. The Parish had been admitted into union with the Convention just three days less than the year canonically required as the period of the residence of the Rector before he could be admitted to a seat in the Convention. After a lengthy discussion, the report excluded the Rev. Mr. Ridgely, was accepted.

Following on to the next Convention, we find that the delegates from S. Luke's were John Barnsley and William Paff. Mr. Ridgeley presented the first report

of the Parish, including also his Sundays at Yardleyville. In this report it is stated that there had been during the past year, 8 Baptisms, 3 Burials, 4 Marriages and 12 Communicants added. That there were about 50 families; 104 public services had been held; that there was a Sunday School with 60 pupils and 8 teachers. An interesting item of this report is that the Holy Communion was administered recently for the first time in Newtown. It had not yet been administered at Yardleyville.

From 1832 to about 1871, the Churches at Newtown and Yardley were to some extent united, both having the same Rector. Indeed during the time Rev. Mr. Webb was Rector, he had charge of Grace Church Hulmeville, in which place he resided, S. Andrew's, Yardley and S. Luke's, Newtown, driving twenty-three and a half miles each Sunday, and preaching three times. And while Rev. Mr. Carpenter was our Rector for part of the time he officiated at both S. Luke's and Trinity, Centreville, driving twenty miles each Sunday and preaching twice.

There are other matters of interest pertaining more especially to the material development of the Parish, that should be mentioned. The pews are the same that were originally placed in the church, except where the organ now is, there was a large square pew occupied by Dr. Phineas Jenks. This pew was of the same dimensions as the Worth or Thornton pew on the East side. There was no raised chancel at first, the small white altar (now standing in the sacristy) was placed against the wall and the pulpit was one of the old Colonial style, high pulpits with winding-stairs Some time after the purchase of the lot from David Roberts in 1836, and the building of the sexton's house this pulpit was removed, and a high square pulpit was built with steps into it from the sacristy. A consider-

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able while afterwards, George Whitall had the present reredos built, and a raised chancel with a railing along the outside, and the pulpit was placed near the reredos. In 1855 a frame tower was erected, and the bell placed therein, before which time, the bell had been hung on a high pole at the Southeast corner of the church.

The Parish house was erected in 1893, the corner-stone being laid by Bishop Whitaker. The iron fence along the front and sides of the church, was the gift from the late Joseph Barnsley.

In 1904 the old frame tower was replaced by the brick tower, the building of which was made possible through special subscriptions. In the following year, 1905, the Pipe Organ was presented to the Parish by Major and Mrs. Comfort, a generous gift, highly appreciated by all the parishioners.

As a matter not only of interest but of record, a list of memorials and gifts to the Church is here added. The Font and Altar Rail were given in memory of Eliza Worth Eyre, who had been a devout communicant and worker in the Church until her death, Oct. 3rd, 1890. The Fontewer, is in memory of Elizabeth Mary Jenks, 1862-1867. The silver alms bason was presented in 1893 by Mr. and Mrs. George A. Jenks, in memory of "Amelia Snyder Jenks, wife of Dr. Phineas Jenks. A devout and earnest labourer in St. Luke's Church, Newtown, Pa., until her death August 6th, 1859." The Lectern is "In memoriam Frances Wayne Chambers, 1811-1888, and Alexander Chambers, 1808-1898." The Pulpit is in memory of "Mary Hough Barnsley, 1814-1895. Erected in 1911 by her son John Herman Barnsley." The Reading Desk is a memorial of "Mary Ann Barnsley, 1809-1889, the gift of her niece, Wilhelmina H. Barnsley." The handsome quartered oak Altar which was given in 1902, has the following inscription:—"To the Glory of God,

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and in loving memory of Henry Martyn Torbert, Priest and Rector of Saint Stephen's Church, Boston, Mass., Born 2 Dec. 1845. Died 29 Sept. 1901. Presented by his Parishioners." In addition to the Altar, there were included in this same Memorial, the Credence Table and a Chalice and Paten. The Rev. H. M. Torbert, formerly lived in Newtown, and officiated a number of times in this, his parish church. His funeral was held in S. Luke's and his body rests in the Newtown cemetery. Another chalice and paten were presented as a thank-offering, by Mrs. Henry C. Thornton. The Altar Cross is in memory of Mary K. Buckman. The vases, in memory of George A. Whitall, a former vestryman. The Book Rest, in memory of Frances Wayne Chambers. The Candlesticks, in memory of Anne Lindsey Haines Emhardt, Oct. 3rd, 1919. The Priest's Prayer Book, in memory of Elizabeth Lee Douglass. The beautiful silk flag was given on Memorial Day, 1916, and bears this inscription:—"To the Glory of God and in honor of the Nation, this flag was presented by Thomas Preston Chambers."

The memorial windows of the church are dedicated as follows:—the first one on the East side, to the memory of "James Worth and Margaret his wife." The second to the memory of "Phineas Jenks M. D. ,and his wife, Amelia Snyder." On the West side, the first is to the memory of Henry Clay Thornton. The second to John and Mary Hough Barnsley. At the North end, the windows are in memory of "Anna Barnsley Pickering, and Mary Barnsley Worstall," and William Barnsley, and his son, John Henry Barnsley."

The Tablets on the walls of the church are erected to the memory of the following persons:—"William Paff, 1790-1869. One of the Founders of this Parish

and a member of the first Vestry. Erected by his Daughter, Mary E. Barnsley." To Gwendolyn Spong 1903. To Alfred Bayard Crewitt, 1908. To Anna Barnsley Pickering, 1908. To George Antes Jenks, 1909, for forty-nine years a vestryman of this Parish, and his wife, Ellen Davis Jenks, 1911.

The Seventy-fifth Anniversary of the Parish was celebrated in 1907. On S. Luke's Day, October 18th, the Rev. Jacob Leroy, Dean of the Convocation, was the preacher at the 11 o'clock Eucharist. At the close of the Luncheon, the Rev. W. C. Emhardt, the rector, presided at an informal meeting, when short addresses were made by visiting clergy and three of the vestrymen. An historical paper, (from which much of the above history is taken) was read by George A. Jenks, the Accounting Warden.

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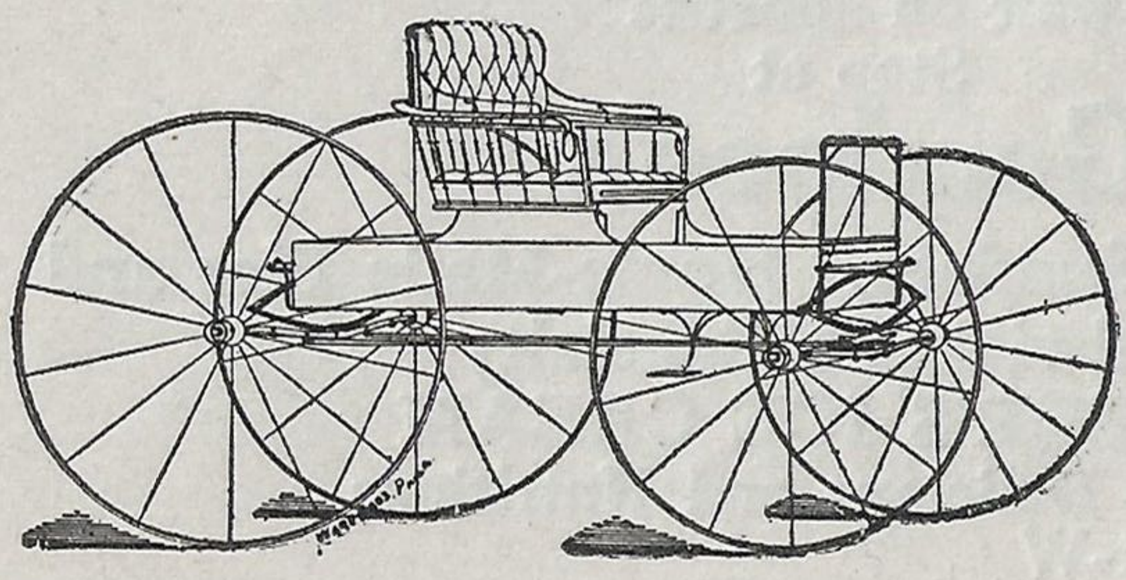

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